Ecopack Ambalaj

The goal of EcoPackers Inc., a business Nuha Siddiqui co-founded, is to replace conventional polystyrene (styrofoam) and polymer packing materials with biodegradable ones. Recent pre-seed and seed investment and funding for the firm totaled $4.3 million.

EcoPackages manufactures 100% biodegradable replacements for conventional plastic using the power of plants. The capacity to make thoughtful selections and produce non-toxic plant-based single-use packaging is provided by its **ecopack ambalaj** to plastic producers globally. Siddiqui originally had the concept for the company while serving as president of the Enactus social entrepreneurship club at the University of Toronto (U of T). Before receiving help from the Creative Destruction Lab, she started off by producing packing peanuts from agricultural waste.

Agricultural byproducts are recycled into environmentally friendly packaging for the company's products.

In addition to developing three more plastic substitutes while attending NEXT 36, Siddiqui, a Rotman Commerce graduate from the University of Toronto, earned the self-assurance to take the helm of her company.

She had to go to tremendous measures to persuade customers of the environmental friendliness of her products. According to Siddiqui, "I would taste the product" when people didn't think it was completely biodegradable. "People were surprised and worried."

In order to transform the way plastic items are produced, used, and disposed of, she has assembled a team at dopak ambalaj made up of committed scientists, engineers, and environmentalists.

They have raised an incredible new $4.3 million, and they are well on their way to improving the world.

EcoPackages' expansion and internationalization were influenced by U of T Entrepreneurship.

Interest from clients and investors increased. The team earned $4.3 million in initial and venture finance, including an investment from CDL founder Ajay Agrawal, and won the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Elevator Pitch Competition. We came to CDL with a totally different business, and we got direct guidance on how to truly grow up a firm, adds Siddiqui. "And we put together an amazing team of mentors and advisers."

EcoPackers is already ramping up pilot projects in Asia and supplying plastic producers with their resin so they may test making greener goods in a cleaner manner. With ambitions to increase the team size in 2020, Siddiqui is also establishing R&D facilities and employing additional engineers.
In the near future, EcoPackers will continue to have an office in the ONRamp facility thanks to the mentoring and access offered by U of T Entrepreneurship.

When she reflects on her time at the University of Toronto, Siddiqui is eternally appreciative of how the institution fostered an environment conducive to entrepreneurship.

To even launch a business as a second-year university student, she exclaims. "That scared me. However, U of T has encouraged many young people, like me, to feel the bravery to start a business and the conviction that your passion may actually materialize.

It's time to utilize single-use packaging that is entirely biodegradable.

Siddiqui believed that since it is difficult to change consumer behavior, plastic substitutes should be developed. These products would allow consumers to continue purchasing green beans in bags, shampoo in bottles, and coffee to go without harming the environment. Her Enactus team began by producing packing peanuts from leftover food as a first step. They could be thrown in the kitchen compost bins. To demonstrate how natural the peanuts were, she would frequently consume one, she recalls.

Siddiqui founded EcoPackers in 2018 after earning his degree, together with Kritika Tyagi (BSc 2019 VIC), and Chang Dong (MEng 2018). The team spent six months working with U of T's Creative Destruction Lab (CDL) incubator at the Rotman School of Management after she entered the Next 36 program, a Government of Canada entrepreneurial initiative created in 2010. According to Siddiqui, "We realized that the true value of our product was the science underlying what we were doing. Polystyrene and polypropylene resins are used to make single-use plastics. An inexpensive, fully biodegradable resin that integrates perfectly into the system currently in place for making plastic was developed by EcoPackers.